

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

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R 042141Z NEC 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY SANAA
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E.O. 11652:N/A
TAGS: PFOR
SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING DECEMBER 4,
1974:

QUOTE: Q. YESTERDAY THE ISRAELI FOREIGN MINISTER MADE MENTION IN THE PARLIAMENT THAT THERE WAS A COMMITMENT BY EGYPT TO ALLOW ISRAELI-BOUND CARGO SHIPS, BUT NOT ISRAELI FLAG SHIPS, TO TRANSIT THE SUEZ WHEN IT'S OPEN. WHAT'S SURPRISING ABOUT THIS IS THERE WAS SO MUCH ATTENTION BEING GIVEN TO THIS ONE. THE SECRETARY HIMSELF, I THINK, AT THIS LAST PRESS CONFERENCE SPOKE ABOUT THIS, AND IT WAS UNDERSTOOD FROM THE BEGINNING THAT PART OF THE DISENGAGEMENT WOULD BE THAT SUCH SHIPS WOULD BE ALLOWED TO TRANSIT THE SUEZ, AS PART OF THE UNDERSTANDING AT KILOMETER 101. DO YOU HAVE A COMMENT ON THAT?

A. WHAT IS YOUR QUESTION?

Q. WELL, THE QUESTION IS, IS THERE SOMETHING NEW COMING OUT OF THIS, OR IS THE U.S. POSITION CHALLENGED IN ANY WAY

ON THIS?

A. WELL, I'LL HAVE TO GIVE YOU A VERY GENERAL ANSWER. WE'VE SAID THIS REPEATEDLY, THAT WE'RE NOT GOING TO COMMENT ON THE SUBSTANCE OF PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS WHICH LED TO THE JANUARY AGREEMENT BETWEEN ISRAEL AND EGYPT. IN-SO-FAR AS THE UNITED STATES IS INVOLVED IN THIS AGREEMENT, I JUST WANT TO NOTE THAT ALL THE RELEVANT MATERIAL ON THE UNCLASSIFIED

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UNDERSTANDINGS REACHED HAVE BEEN SUBMITTED TO THE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS CONCERNED, AS THE SECRETARY HAS MADE VERY, VERY CLEAR. AND I DON'T REALLY HAVE ANY OTHER COMMENT. I DON'T WANT TO GET INTO COMMENTING ON WHAT ANY OF THE PARTIES MAY HAVE TO SAY ON PROPOSALS AT ALL AT THIS TIME. WE'RE IN A PERIOD OF QUIET DIPLOMACY HERE, AND WE JUST WANT TO LEAVE IT THERE.

Q. IS IT TRUE THOUGH, BOB, THAT THE SECRETARY HAS SAID PUBLICLY THAT THERE WOULD BE SOME EGYPTIAN CONCESSIONS CONCERNING THE CANAL FOR SHIPS HEADING FOR ISRAEL?

A. WELL, ON THAT, KEN, I CAN ONLY REFER TO YOU TO WHAT THE SECRETARY DID SAY PUBLICLY. I THINK IT WAS THE DAY AFTER WE GOT BACK FROM CHICAGO, NOVEMBER 15, AT HIS PRESS CONFERENCE.

Q. THAT STANDS?

A. AND THAT STANDS. END QUOTE. KISSINGER

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